

# JACK and the Beanstalk



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A RAND McNALLY BOOK





# JACK and the Beanstalk

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RAND McNALLY & COMPANY · Chicago  
*Established 1856*

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ONCE there was a poor widow who had an only son, named Jack. He was good-natured and affectionate but lazy. As time went on, the widow grew poorer and poorer until she had nothing left but her cow. And all the time, Jack grew lazier and lazier.

One day Jack's mother said to him, "Tomorrow you must take the cow to market. The more money you get for her the better, for we have nothing left to live on."

Next morning Jack got up earlier than usual, hung a horn around his shoulder, and started out with the cow. On the way to market he met a queer little old man.

"Good morning, my lad," said the queer little old man. "Where may you be going with that fine cow?"

"I'm taking her to market," replied Jack.

"As if you had wit enough to sell cows! A bit of a lad that doesn't even know how many beans make five!"





"Two in each hand and one in your mouth," answered Jack, with a quickness that would have made his mother proud.

"Oho!" laughed the queer little old man. "Oho! Since you know beans, suppose you look at these," and he held out his hand, filled with rainbow-colored beans. "I'll give you all these for your cow."



"That would be a good bargain," thought Jack. So he traded the cow for the beans and hurried home.

"Look, Mother," he said gleefully, as he poured the beans into her lap. "I got all these pretty beans for the cow."

"You stupid boy!" she cried. "Now we shall have to starve." And she flung the beans out of the open window.



The next morning Jack woke early. He ran into the garden and found a beanstalk had sprung up during the night from the beans his mother had thrown away, and had grown so quickly its top was out of sight.

Jack began to climb, and he climbed and he climbed until he reached the top. He stepped off into the sky and walked on until he met a beautiful woman with a face like a star.





Now the lady was a fairy and she knew what Jack was thinking and answered him without his asking any questions.

She told Jack he was in a country that belonged to a wicked Giant. This Giant had killed Jack's father and stolen all his gold and precious things. Jack had been only a baby at that time, and his mother had been too sad ever to talk to him about it.

"If you and your mother are ever going to be happy again," said the fairy, "you must punish that Giant." She whispered in Jack's ear, telling him what to do. Then she left and Jack walked on.

Toward evening he came to the door of a castle. He blew his horn, and a cook as broad as she was tall opened the door. "I am very tired and hungry," said Jack politely. "Can you give me supper and a night's lodging?"







"You little know, my poor lad, what you ask," she sighed. "A Giant lives here and he eats people. He would be sure to find you and eat you for supper. It would never do!" And she shut the door.

But Jack was too tired to go another step, so he blew his horn again, and when the cook



came to the door he begged her to let him in. She began to cry, but at last led Jack into the kitchen. Soon he was enjoying a good meal and quite forgetting to be afraid. But before he had finished there came a *thump, thump, thump* of heavy feet, and in less than no time the cook had popped Jack into the great oven to hide.

The Giant walked in sniffing the air. "Fe Fi Fo Fum! I smell the blood of an Englishman! Be he live or be he dead, I'll grind up his bones to make my bread!" he thundered.

"You are dreaming," laughed the cook, "but there is something better than dreams in this dish." So the Giant stopped sniffing and sat down to supper.

Through a hole in the oven Jack peeped out and watched the Giant eat. When all the dishes



were empty, the Giant bade the cook, "Bring me my hen."

She brought a much-ruffled hen and put it on the table. "Lay," shouted the Giant, and the hen laid a golden egg.

Again and again the Giant shouted his orders in a voice of thunder, and again and again the hen obeyed, till there were twelve golden eggs on the table. Then the Giant went to sleep and snored so loud that the house shook.





When the biggest snore of all had shaken Jack out of the oven, he seized the hen and ran off as fast as he could to the top of the beanstalk. He climbed quickly down and carried the wonderful hen to his mother. Day after day the hen laid its golden eggs, and by selling them Jack and his mother might have lived in luxury all their lives.

But Jack kept thinking about that wicked Giant who had killed his father, and of the fairy's command. So one day he climbed the beanstalk again. This time he had dressed himself to look like a different person, as he did not want the cook to know him. And, sure enough, when the woman came to the door, she did not recognize the lad she had hidden in the oven.



"Please," said Jack, "can you give me food and a place to rest? I am hungry and tired."

"You can't come in here," answered the cook. "Once before I took in a tired and hungry young runaway, and he stole my master's precious hen that lays golden eggs."

But Jack talked to the cook so pleasantly that she thought it would be unkind to grudge him a meal. After Jack had a good supper, the





cook turned over an empty kettle and hid him under it. And it was none too soon, either, for in stalked the Giant, *thump, thump, thump* sniffing the air. "Fe Fi Fo Fum! I smell the blood of an Englishman! Be he live or be he dead, I'll grind up his bones to make my bread!" he bellowed.

"Stuff and nonsense," laughed the cook. And she placed his supper on the table.



After supper the Giant shouted, "Fetch me my harp." And the cook brought in a beautiful harp with strings of pure gold.

"Play!" commanded the Giant, and the harp began to play all by itself. Soon the Giant's snores drowned the sweet music. Then Jack jumped from under the kettle and seized the harp. But no sooner had he slung it over his shoulder than

it cried out, "Master, Master!" For it was a fairy harp.

Jack was frightened and ran for his life toward the top of the beanstalk. He could hear the Giant running behind him, *thump, thump, thump*. Jack reached the top of the beanstalk and slid down it as quick as lightning, calling out as he went, "Mother, Mother! The ax, the ax!"



Jack's mother, holding out the ax, met him as he touched the ground. There was no time to lose, for the Giant was already halfway down. With one slashing blow Jack cut the beanstalk. There was a crash, and the Giant lay at his feet in the garden. Then Jack told his mother all the story. And as for the wonderful beanstalk it never grew again.





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